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COMIREX-D-25.7/2

10 October 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR: Committee on Imagery Requirements and Exploitation  
SUBJECT: Reconnaissance Coverage of North Korea

Attached for the information of members is a copy of a briefing memorandum on the above subject which was prepared at the request of the Director of Central Intelligence.

[Redacted]

Executive Secretary

Committee on Imagery Requirements and Exploitation

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NRO review(s)  
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9 October 1967

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Reconnaissance Coverage of North Korea

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1. While there are a large number of specific unfilled intelligence requirements concerning North Korea, including a substantial deficit in the coverage of specific targets [redacted] the status of these formal requirements is merely symptomatic of the broad problem of the U.S. intelligence posture vis-a-vis North Korea. Because North Korea has not been an overly active area in recent years the Intelligence Community has tended not to take extraordinary action to collect information when normal intelligence coverage failed to yield desired results. The result has been a growing deficit in current knowledge of the North Korean military posture. This growing deficit has now become a matter of concern because of current North Korean activities against the United States and South Korean forces along the Korean Demilitarized Zone.

2. The Board of National Estimates, in a Post Mortem on a recent estimate of North Korean intentions and capabilities, has stated the problem as follows:

"We recommend increased efforts in the collection and analysis of political, economic, and military information, particularly on the subjects of North Korean intentions toward the South, North Korean ground warfare capabilities and North Korean relations with the USSR particularly as they affect Soviet military aid arrangements."

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Similarly, CINCPAC recently requested the use of BLACK SHIELD to assist in satisfying current intelligence requirements. In doing so the Commander, U.S. Forces, Korea was quoted as follows:

"Belligerent pronouncements by North Korean civil and military leaders, the stepped up pace and expanded scope of North Korean probes along the DMZ, and North Korean efforts to establish the structure for later guerilla operations in the ROK are considered sufficient justification to increase our intelligence collection effort."

We would expect aerial photography to be the primary source of military information concerning North Korean ground warfare capabilities including supply levels, troop concentrations, and the equipment provided to North Korea by Soviet military aid.

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time. Clandestine and defector reporting on North Korean military activities is greatly diminished due to tightened internal security.

3. Other reconnaissance assets that have been available for use against North Korea are:

a. KH-4--Mission 1101, during the period 21-28 September 1967, provided usable photography of over 85% of North Korea. Preliminary reports indicate that the air and naval air order of battle counts were normal as compared to previous photographic coverage.

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c. U-2--North Korea was last covered by the U-2 TACKLE program on 31 July, 1965. This program is currently stood down; but even if a U-2 mission were attempted against North Korea, it would now have only limited access because of the SAM sites which protect much of the interior of the country.

d. Theater reconnaissance assets--A number of military reconnaissance projects have provided oblique photography and radar coverage of North Korea from peripheral tracks. Since much of the terrain photographed is broken, activity in valleys or on the far side of mountains cannot be observed. The coverage is further degraded by haze and rapid fall off in scale and resolution.

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4. Analysis is continuing on the exploitation of the recent KH-4 [redacted] We may be able to identify some new targets in the KH-4 mission that will require [redacted] but we expect that the effect of full exploitation of these missions will be marginal. We do not expect them to answer the problems discussed in paragraph 1 above.

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5. If the BLACK SHIELD aircraft were employed over North Korea in appropriate weather it has the capability to provide

coverage of the country within a short period of time would be of substantial assistance in correcting the intelligence deficit on the North Korean military posture and in providing a new baseline against which to check other intelligence as may become available.

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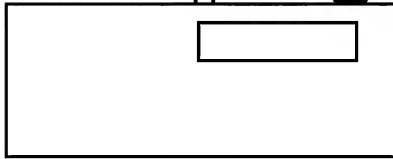
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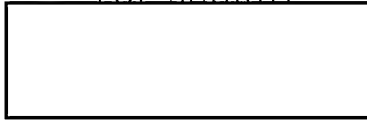
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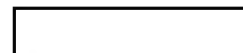
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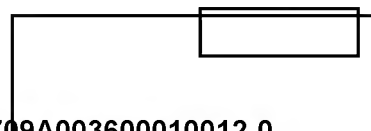
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